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TO

CANDID & SERIOUS MEN.

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BY SOME

FRIENDS OF MANKIND.

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*CANDID & SERIOUS MEN.*

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DEAR FELLOW CHRISTIANS,

**W**E entreat you to bear with us, while we point out the danger to which you are exposed at this time from the attacks of infidelity; and while we show the cause, we will endeavour to point out the way to escape; that so you may be preserved in that hour of temptation which is coming upon all professors of Christianity as a trial of their faith. We exhort you in the words of the apostle Paul, to prove all things, and, only, hold fast that which is good: that the trial of your faith being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried by fire, may be found unto praise, and honour, and glory, at the appearing of Jesus Christ. The day in which we live calls for the closest examination of every sentiment we hold, seeing, through the prevalence of infidelity, we are called upon either to defend the truths we believe, or, by our silence, cause the good name of Christ and his doctrines to become the scoff and derision of his enemies. The scriptures have informed us of the fall of Antichrist, which we see fulfilling in our day; they have also as clearly foretold the rise and success of infidelity: while therefore infidels are opposing the scriptures, they are living monuments of their truth: for Peter has expressly declared, that, in the latter days there shall come scoffers, walking after their own lusts, saying, where is the promise of his coming? For since the Fathers fell asleep all things remain as they were from the beginning of the creation! And Christ hath said, when the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith upon the earth?

A

We



We are fully persuaded that infidelity will spread far and wide, and will carry away the faith of the greater part of professing Christians. The reason is obvious. All the nations and churches have drank of the cup which is in the hand of *Mystery Babylon the Mother of Harlots*, and have become drunken. Each church, as it has discovered some error, and embraced some truth, has made an *Image of the Beast* from which it has separated; and pronounced them Heretics who dared to enquire any farther. Another cause is this, that most men instead of exercising their reason in the examination of the scripture, either totally exclude it from any use in Religion, or are content with trusting to the opinion of Priests: of whom, in general, it may be said as our Lord said of the Pharisees of old, they make void the law of God through their traditions, and teach for doctrines the commandments of men. Nor is it to be wondered at, that the infidel should be successful with such men: for as in the first instance they have given up their right of judgement to another, so when attacked and called upon to defend the sentiments they profess to believe, they must fall; because they are not founded upon that rock, *the Scriptures of Divine Truth*. But though infidelity will thus succeed, it is by the permission of God, to destroy superstition, and when it has accomplished that work, which it is calculated most effectually to do; it shall be said unto it, *Thus far shalt thou go, and no farther, and here shall thy proud waves be stayed*. Then shall Jesus come, and take to himself his great power and reign, and the kingdoms of this world shall become the kingdoms of our God, and of his Christ. Then the truth, as it is in Jesus, shall be universally received, and the knowledge and righteousness of Jehovah shall cover the earth as the waters cover the place of the sea; nor shall they need to tell each man his neighbour, saying, know ye the Lord: for all shall know him from the smallest to the greatest. One grand cause of the success of infidelity, is the variety of opinions held by Christians, which have arisen from the false glosses put upon the scriptures by interested men of corrupt minds. These differences have, generally, related either to the nature of God, or the conduct of God. Without saying any thing of his *nature*; which no man can fully know; because it is not revealed; we would propose a criterion whereby the most unlearned may know who is truly God, viz. He who is truly God in the highest sense of the word, must be *self-existent, independent, and all-sufficient*; and let who will be called God, if he be deficient of either

of



of these properties, he cannot be the *only true God*, whom Christ says, *it is eternal life to know*.

In respect to the second ground of difference; the conduct of God towards his creatures; we would propose the following as a criterion. The attributes of God, as set forth in the scriptures, and acknowledged by all Christians: yea even Deists, are, that He is infinitely wise, powerful, and good. Now as all our ideas of the conduct of God ought to agree with the attributes we ascribe to him, we would propose to our Christian brethren in general; *and also to the serious Deist*; to take all their opinions, as to the conduct of God, to this criterion; and they may rest assured, that what will not agree in every respect with his wisdom, power, and more especially his goodness, cannot be true; *for God is love*. And now we will say before you wherein we think the doctrines of Calvinism, Armenianism, and Deism, are contrary to reason, revelation, and the attributes of Deity: and endeavour to show that each of them have some truth, and that the union of those truths, freed from the errors by which they have been obscured, form the doctrine we mean to propose for your reception, and which appears to be the doctrine of the scripture, viz. *The final recovery of all God's creatures to holiness and happiness*, which we conceive is a rallying point for Christians, where they may meet, and a ground for infidels to believe the scriptures without giving up their reason, or contradicting the ideas they have formed of the attributes of God. We would first address ourselves to our Calvinist brethren, who believe that God before the foundation of the world determined the fall of our first parent, and that in consequence of his fall all his posterity should become exposed to endless wrath; but that of his rich grace and favour, he determined to give his Son to die to satisfy Divine Justice for the sins of a part, who are called the Elect; while the rest he passed by, and left in irremediable ruin; no provision being made for their salvation: in consequence of which they must be doomed to unutterable anguish while God exists. Some of them do not even except children. And all say, God will punish, and the damned will blaspheme, and God will punish them the more for their blasphemy! So that they will both be endlessly increasing, God in punishing, and they in blaspheming! Let not the man whose heart is better than the doctrine he holds, say, 'I do not believe that children will be damned;' for it is a natural consequence of absolute predestination. If they are not of the Elect (according to your creed) they cannot be saved, and it is no where said that all children

are of the Elect; nay it is clear that there are no children who are Elect; because the things spoken of the Elect absolutely forbid it: for it is said the Elect believe; they are called for a purpose; they are exhorted as the Elect of God to put on bowels of compassion, and they are said to be a peculiar people, zealous of good works; all which children are incapable of. So that if absolute predestination be true, and none but those who are called the Elect in scripture can be saved, all children, every tender smiling infant, must be endlessly damned! Nor will it be more unjust in God to damn infants than if they lived to be men, according to your scheme; because they are not damned for their own sin, but for the sin of Adam, committed long before they were born. Now we would ask, how will this sentiment agree with the attributes of God? Or would it not rather agree with a Being infinitely powerful, infinitely unwise, and infinitely wicked? If it were true, would it not make the ever Blessed God, *who is love*, an Almighty Monster? It would be imputing to him, what few men if they had it in their power, would be cruel enough to do, viz. That of giving existence on purpose to make that existence completely miserable! What a horrid idea must we form of God when he declares, As I live saith Jehovah, I have no pleasure in the death of a sinner; but would rather that he should turn from the error of his ways and live! When if your scheme be true, he has pleasure in their death, for all things were made for his pleasure. If he made all but the Elect, to be damned, he must have pleasure in their death, and in their damnation; because he made them for that purpose: and when he exhorts them to turn, it can be for no other purpose but to tantalize the poor devoted victims, whom he knows have not the power to turn, being bound up in his eternal decree to damnation. These sentiments are so contrary to reason, to the character of God, as well as to Revelation; which declares that God will have all men to be saved, and come to the knowledge of the truth; that God sent his Son to be the Saviour of the world; and that he is the propitiation for our (the Elect's) sins, and not for our's only, but for the sins of the whole world; that unless you give them up, and in addition to one truth which you have, viz. That all whom Christ died for shall be saved; receive what the scripture holds forth, that Christ died for all, and that God will finally make all his creatures happy; you cannot make the scriptures harmonize, nor withstand the attacks of infidelity.

We would next address ourselves to our Armenian brethren

thren, who hold that Christ died for all; but that he will have shed his blood in vain, for by far the greatest part of mankind, who must be endlessly damned. That when millions of millions of years shall have past, wherein they have been tormented day and night for the sins of a few years, the end of their punishment shall be no nearer than when it first began! The Justice of God still demanding their *eternal misery*! Thus God must be always seeking satisfaction to his injured justice, and be eternally disappointed. The creature always punished, and always adding to his crimes by blaspheming the God who made him! And Satan the grand adversary, be able to boast that he has robbed the Blessed God of the greatest part of mankind whom he sent his Son to save. So that Christ must endlessly be frustrated in the work he came to perform, viz. That of destroying the works of the Devil, sin, and misery. Now we would ask them to consider, whether the wisdom, or power of God, is not impeached in these doctrines. For if he willed the salvation of all, must it not be for want of wisdom in planning, or power in executing what his wisdom planned? If he does not bring to pass what his goodness willed to be done. Is it not more consistent with reason, that he who is the Creator, the Father, and the Friend of all, wills the salvation of all, and sent his Son to die for all; will finally as he hath promised, reconcile all things to himself: that so when the Son delivers up the kingdom to God even the Father, there may be none missing, but Christ may be able to say, 'Father I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do, of all which thou gavest me I have lost none: all thy creatures which were in rebellion against thee are subdued, reconciled, and restored; all evil is banished from thy creation, and every creature in heaven, in earth, and under the earth, ascribe blessing and honour and glory to thee their God who sittest upon the throne, and to me the Lamb, who shed my blood for them, and have been the honoured instrument in thine hand of their salvation: and now I acknowledge thee the only rightful Sovereign, and return my delegated power, that thou, O Father, mayest be all in all!' Seeing then the sentiment you hold will not stand the test of reason, the attributes of Deity, or Revelation, we exhort you to add, that one truth of the Calvinists; viz. that all whom Christ died for shall be saved; to that which you hold, and you will be able to make the scriptures all agree, and rejoice in the universal and efficacious love of God.

We now address ourselves to serious Deists, whom we rather pity than condemn, especially, when we consider how



contrary the sentiments we have been examining, are to reason, and to the attributes of God, as well as revelation; and we would invite them to think again. We would say, ye advocates for reason, let reason be your guide: a guest long banished from what is called the Christian world; but which, we trust, has not forsaken; but has always been the friend and companion of *real Christianity*! You acknowledge there is one God the Creator of all, and say he is infinite in wisdom, power, and goodness: and that you discover this from the works of creation. You admit the power of God to reveal himself to his creatures; but think he has not so done, nor was there any reason he should, but through the book of creation: and object to the book we call the Bible, because you say it abounds with contradictions: that it ascribes things to God, which you think contrary to his attributes, which if it were the word of God it could not do. We agree with you in the existence of a God infinitely wise, powerful and good. This is the foundation of true religion, and clearly set forth in the scriptures. We also conceive it was necessary, consistent with his attributes, that God should reveal himself to his creatures, on account of the difficulty of attaining (if it could be attain'd) necessary knowledge of God from the works of creation. When the idea of such a Being is once made known to man by Revelation, it serves as a first principle from which to reason, as to his will and conduct towards his creatures. Indeed it seems so reasonable, that men are disposed to persuade themselves it is an innate idea. But Deists, though they will not acknowledge it, have gotten their idea of ONE GOD from the Bible: a strong proof of which is, the extreme ignorance of those nations who have it not; and we may challenge them to produce one nation, who have acknowledged one God and no more, who had not the Bible to instruct them. But admitting for a moment, that the existence and attributes of God were to be discovered from the works of creation: yet as all men have not the capacity, opportunity or disposition, so minutely to examine them as to make this discovery: and to deduce those principles and ideas from it, which are necessary to regulate their conduct amidst the temptations to which they are exposed; to console and support them in the hour of affliction, sickness, or death; the wisdom, power and goodness of God are displayed in revealing himself to mankind in a way suitable to their weakness and their wretchedness, brought on themselves by transgression, and also suited to the fears and hopes of the human mind: capable of dispelling the one, and animating the other: which while it holds

holds out the displeasure of God at iniquity, gives the greatest encouragement to virtue; at the same time an example the most excellent, is given us to follow; even Jesus Christ; whose great character is, 'He was a man approved of God, who went about doing good.' We are exhorted to look to and imitate him, who for the Joy set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is henceforth set down at the right hand of God. A similar reward to which he has promised to all his faithful followers. Now this Revelation as contained in the scriptures, but especially in the new testament, contains the purest morality; so full and clear a discovery of the attributes of deity, the doctrines of a future state of retribution, the destruction of all moral and natural evil out of the creation; with the final restoration of all Gods creatures to holiness and happiness; that the study of the longest life could never have attained to; and yet the weakest mind, free from prejudice, by reading the scriptures may easily comprehend. Now we would ask from what part of the book of creation can you discover and prove a future state of existence? And if it is not to be discovered, it would be the highest pitch of credulity to believe it; and if it is not to be believed, how will you support the attributes you ascribe to Deity, of wisdom, power, and goodness, upon viewing the present state of mankind where so much ignorance, oppression, and misery abound, where you see the wicked prosper, and the virtuous and benevolent surrounded with difficulties? Suppose you could persuade a man there was a future state, and upon a survey of his past conduct he should find he had not used those powers (which no doubt were given him by a wise and good Being for a wise and good use) agreeable to the use for which they were given, and that a Holy Being must require an account of the use of them! We ask from what chapter of the book of creation will you prove that upon repentance he will obtain pardon, and be received into the favour of God? Verily from what comfort you can afford, he must go mourning under a sense of guilt all his life long! Not so the Christian, he can point him to the scripture, which shews in the plainest manner the readiness of God our Father to receive returning prodigals, and to encourage the smallest disposition to return to virtue and to holiness. The language of the scripture is repent and be converted. Believe and you shall be saved: and he that brought this message laid down his life for us, that he might seal its truth with his blood; and as a farther confirmation, God has raised him from the dead, and exalted him as a prince, and a Saviour, to give repentance  
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and remission of sins. Again we would ask from your book of creation, what support or comfort can you give, what oil of consolation can you pour into the wounded soul of the virtuous man, smarting under the cruel hand of the oppressor, and wanting all the comforts of life? Alas! you may say it is possible there is an hereafter, or the time will come when you will cease to exist! Would not this reflection arise? can there be a God? or if there is, can he be thus careless of his creatures and give us no well grounded hope of compensation in a future state for what we patiently suffer here? and if thus careless of me; my wife, my children when I am gone! will yet be left exposed to all the wretchedness that I have endured; for if there was a God and he was wise, powerful, and good, would he not stand forward the friend of injured innocence, and strike the oppressor dead? Not so the Christian, he sees the end of all these things. He knows the troubles of this life, this state of trial, are but as it were for a moment, while the future glory and happiness of them who obey the will of God, shall never end. But we would ask the Deist, what right have you to complain of the oppressor? It is your creed to follow nature, He is following nature; for in the present state of nature, power establishes right. In your book of nature great fish eat little fish, great beasts eat little ones: and among men the strong oppress the weak. Now let us ask you, do you seriously think a wise, powerful, and good God, made things as they now appear? Or is it not more reasonable, that the whole creation has departed, with man its head, from what it was when it came from the hands of God? And is it not consistent with reason, as well as revelation, that he will take means (and what so likely as those revealed in the scriptures) to bring all back to its original state? With respect to the objection, that the Bible contains in the historical parts, an account of things said to be done by the command of God, which you say are contrary to his attributes: we would say to those who have been used to the reading and study of history, You know how extremely difficult it is to explain many trifling matters of fact, any length of time after they have happened; because they depend so much upon time, place, custom, and circumstances, which though difficult to us, were well known to those in whose time they happened; and if difficulties arise in history in general, how much more in Bible history, written so concise as it is? Not being written to satisfy our curiosity, but to help our faith. But the objection lays with greater force



force against your book of creation, for while our book only records things done by the command of God, your book of creation frequently destroys by earthquake, volcano, &c. whole cities : the innocent with the guilty. We by the help of revelation are able to see through all these things, and know that God is the governor of nature, and that he makes use of different parts of it, whether animate or inanimate, to punish the wickedness of mankind ; and by the destruction of one part, to make his power known, that so while his judgements are abroad in the earth the inhabitants may learn righteousness.

If in the destructions which take place either by earthquakes, volcanoes, &c. or in God permitting, or commanding one wicked nation to destroy another more wicked, children are cut off, they have less to account for. And we do not know that the sword to an infant, is a more painful death than many they experience in the common course of nature ; beside they are delivered from the evils to which when their parents were taken from them they would have been exposed as orphans. And were God to spare the parents for the sake of their children, their example might be the cause of their suffering in a future state, for God never takes a people off by violent means till every means consistent with their moral agency, both in judgement and in mercy, hath been tried ; till they have become a curse, and a nuisance to the rest of mankind, by their evil conduct and example. In respect to the Bible being called the word of God, and containing contradictions, we would say, What we mean, by calling it the word of God, is, that it was written by the authority of God, and contains the words and actions of good and bad men, history, chronology, genealogy, &c. all which only needed that God in his Providence should cause men of integrity and ability, to write what they knew, either by their own observation, or by well authenticated tradition, which the people among whom they lived, knowing to be true, preserved as valuable records among their sacred books. Other parts of scripture, such as prophecy, doctrines, &c. which could not be discovered but by revelation, God communicated to faithful men to write for our benefit, and generally gave them power to work miracles, as a confirmation they came from God. Also prophecy by its fulfilment is a continual miracle, for those who live in after ages, to confirm the truth of scripture : and if men would make the same allowance for the Bible, they would for any other book of like antiquity, there, is  
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not any difficulty but might be reasonably explained; but Deists by giving up revelation must give up their reason, for is it reasonable if Christ had been an impostor, he would have chosen twelve poor fishermen, and that they should succeed in propagating a falsehood, to the overturning of long standing prejudices? That none of them during his life should turn evidence. Even Judas when he might have made himself great, and cleared his own conscience by proving Christ an impostor, says, I am guilty in that I have betrayed innocent blood. Or is it reasonable that his disciples; who when he was crucified fled, and said they had thought he was to have been the Restorer of Israel, but when he was dead gave up all those hopes; that they should return and persuade themselves he was risen, that they had seen him, handled and conversed with him: and none of them be convinced it was a delusion? But should publicly preach in the city where he was crucified, accuse the rulers and the people of his murder: and declare that God had raised him up again. That these should succeed in propagating this doctrine all over the world in opposition to power, wealth, and prejudice, and at last seal the truth of it with their blood is incredible. These things are so contrary to reason, that if there were no other argument than this, that it is harder to disbelieve than to believe the authenticity of the scriptures, we would be Christians! But in addition to every thing that can be said, the believer has the witness within himself, he has felt the renovating influence of the scriptures, bringing him from darkness to light, and from the power of sin and Satan to serve the living God, thereby receiving that peace which passes all understanding, and looking forward with a well-grounded hope to future glory. Having thus briefly attempted to shew that the doctrines of Calvinism and Arminianism are not consistent with Reason, Revelation or the attributes of God, and that Deism is deficient of many things necessary for the guide and comfort of rational but imperfect creatures: as well as what we ought to expect from the attributes they ascribe to God; we will propose to their consideration a system which we think fully agrees with Reason, the divine Attributes and Revelation. viz. the doctrine of the restoration of all things, which God has spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began Acts, iii. 21. That it is agreeable to the divine attributes we think is clear from the following consideration, If God is wise he must have an end to answer in bringing rational creatures into existence. And if he is good, that  
design

design must be worthy of his wisdom and goodness. And being infinitely happy and glorious in himself, he needed not his creatures, seeing they could not add to either. We were created therefore for no other purpose but that he might communicate a portion of his own blessedness to us; that his creatures might know him and enjoy him: and notwithstanding the present or future misery of any of them. His power will accomplish what his wisdom plan'd and his goodness willed: the final happiness of all his creatures. It is also consistent with Reason, that as God is the first cause of all so he should seek the happiness of all his creatures? and deal justly with them, and we might ask, where would be his justice in punishing a creature surrounded with infirmities, and exposed to temptations as man is, endlessly, for the transgressions of a few years? But that he will punish the sinner according to his crimes, few stripes, and many stripes, by weight and measure, for a longer or shorter duration, is so consistent with reason, that it must strike the mind of every man with its certainty and propriety: especially when all this punishment is considered as proceeding from love, and suited to the different cases of his creatures: for as moral agents he cannot make men happy while they are in slavery to sin and at enmity with him, who is the center of their happiness. Thus we see, this doctrine of universal love, is consistent with the divine attributes and reason; and that it is agreeable to revelation, the sacred pages show abundantly, *Gen.* 28. 14, the promise made to Abraham, in thee and in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed; also *Isaiah* xxv. 7, 8, and he will destroy in this mountain the face of the covering cast over all people, and the veil that is spread over all nations: he will swallow up death in victory, and the Lord God will wipe away tears from the face of all people. Again *Isaiah* xlv. 23, I have sworn by myself, the word has gone out of my mouth and shall not return, that unto me every knee shall bow, and every tongue shall swear: truly shall say in Jehovah have I righteousness and strength. (We leave out the words in the last verse, which are in *italics* in our translation, and always denote they are not in the original.) Now if God will wipe away tears from all faces, if he will cause every knee to bow, and every tongue to swear allegiance to him, and say that in him they have righteousness and strength; the doctrine of the restoration must be agreeable to Old Testament revelation. We hope to show it is (if possible) more clearly revealed in the New. The angel who announced our Saviour's birth declared



declares it is glad tidings of great joy which shall be to all people; which it cannot be if any are endlessly damn'd. Our Lord also informs us he came to seek and to save that which was lost; and if all have sinned all were lost; then it is clear he came to seek and to save all.

Paul, 1 *Timothy* ii. 1, exhorts that prayer and supplication be made for all men; and verses 4, 5, gives as a reason, that God will have all men to be saved, and come to the knowledge of the truth, for there is one God, and one Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus: who gave himself a ransom for all to be testified in due time. And he also declares 1 *Tim.* iv. 10. The living God is the Saviour of all men, but especially of those that believe. And *Ephes.* i. 10. That in the fulness of the dispensation of the times, he might gather together in one all things in Christ Jesus, both which are in heaven and which are on earth, even in him. Also *Colos.* i. 19, 20. For it pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell, and having made peace by the blood of his cross, (*between Jew and Gentile*) that he might reconcile all things unto himself, by him I say, whether they be things in heaven or things on earth. Thus we see the New Testament, from the few passages quoted, is full to the point that God will reconcile, restore, and rehead all things by Christ Jesus: to whom the Father hath given all power in heaven and in earth, that he may accomplish this glorious work. And he is now in this life gathering to himself a people whose character is, that they are a peculiar people, zealous of good works. These by believing, obeying, and following their master Jesus; are preparing as instruments, for this great work, that he may make them kings and priests in the future ages to rule over and to instruct the rest of mankind. These are the Elect of God, not chosen to the exclusion of the rest but for the benefit of the whole: and when Christ has destroyed the last enemy, the first and second death, and subdued all things to himself, then shall he deliver up the kingdom to God even the Father, that God may be all in all. The grand objection to this doctrine is, the word everlasting being applied to the punishment of the wicked; but the same word is applied in our translation to things that have had an end. as for instance, *Ex.* xl. 15. The everlasting priesthood of Aaron. *Levit.* xvi. 34. The statute of atonement is called an everlasting statute. Again *Lev.* vi. 13. The fire shall ever be burning upon the altar, it shall never go out, now Christ superceded the priesthood of Aaron, and he was of the tribe of Judah. Christ also made an offering once for all,

all, and put an end to the everlasting statute of atonement, and the fire on the altar of burnt offering has long since ceased to burn. Thus we see the word cannot in its own nature mean endless, but an age or hidden period, that shall last till the work intended to be done is accomplished: and when applied to future punishment, must be taken in a limited sense; for Peter informs us in his II. Epist. iii. 7. The heavens (or atmosphere,) and the earth, which are now, are by the word of God kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgement and perdition of ungodly men. (When all the combustible parts of the earth are destroyed the fire must go out): and in the 13th verse, he says nevertheless we according to his promise look for a new heaven (or atmosphere) and new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness. And the apostle John speaking of a period after the conflagration. *Rev. xxi. 1.* says and I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away, and there was no more sea, verse 3. And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying behold the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God: and God shall wipe away all tears from off all faces, and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain, for the former things are passed away. And he that sat upon the throne said, Behold I make all things new. And he said unto me write, for these things are true and faithful. These things cannot relate to the righteous who are represented as having reigned with Christ long before, nor will it be any thing extraordinary that God should dwell with them, and be their God; but it concerns those who had been in great tribulation, and whom this same apostle describes, *Rev. vii. 9*, as a great multitude which no man could number, of all nations, kindreds, and people, and tongues. And verse 14, the Elder informs John, these are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. Thus the doctrine of the restoration is the doctrine of the scripture, and declared by God himself to be true, and faithful, which should incline every Christian cheerfully to receive it: and Deists to cease their opposition to a book that contains a system so full of love, so consistent with reason, and the divine attributes: which while it takes in every thing that is good in Deism, abundantly supplies what that is deficient of. It is a comfort to the weary and returning prodigal, affords the strongest support

port under affliction, and gives the greatest consolation in the hour of sickness and death. It enables the man who believes it to look through the darkest dispensations, and see a glorious day arising, when by the exercise of infinite wisdom, power, and goodness, all evil will be removed out of the creation, and all will be joy and peace, and universal love. *Rev. v. 13*, when every creature which is in heaven and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them; shall ascribe blessing, and honour, and power, unto him who sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb to the age of ages.

We therefore entreat the persons we have thus addressed, candidly to examine these things; by embracing these views the Deist may still hold that God is infinitely wise, powerful, and good. The Armenian, that he sent his Son to die for all: and the Calvinist, that all whom Christ died for shall be saved. The union of these truths form the system we propose for your reception, viz. An infinitely wise, powerful, and good Being, seeking and accomplishing the final restoration of all his creatures to holiness and happiness, by means suited to their moral agency. That this weak, though sincere attempt may be blessed to bring men to love God, his Christ, and the scriptures of divine truth: also to put an end to the unhappy differences that exist among Christians, that so the church may be one in heart, in soul, and sentiment; is our earnest prayer, to him who is the Father, and the Friend of all mankind: whose name and whose nature are love; through Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour. AMEN:

*Here God's perfections all agree, in this most boundless plan.*

*To set the race of sinners free, and ransom every man.*

2 NO 66

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